



A Healthy Heart and a Happy Ocean

The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa is joining forces with global ocean NGO, Marine Stewardship Council, to promote sustainable seafood this Heart Awareness Month

Cape Town, September 2020 – For the past 40 years, the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) has dedicated their time to provide resources, tools, and support to build healthy communities across our nation and advocate for those who are at high risk for cardiovascular diseases. This Heart Awareness Month is no different. HSFSA is waving their red flag mightily to raise consumer awareness about the health benefits of eating fish, including tinned fish, to reduce the risk of heart disease and strokes.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation’s plan for Heart Awareness Month leading up to World Heart Day

Heart Awareness Month is a platform highlighting the importance of a healthy lifestyle. This includes healthy eating, such as incorporating affordable heart health seafood into your diet. To support this effort, the independent non-profit organisation, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), is joining forces with the HSFSA in launching a new campaign ‘Happy Heart, Happy Ocean’. The aim is to raise consumer awareness of heart-healthy, sustainable seafood – easily identifiable in-store by simply looking for the Heart Mark logo and the MSC blue fish label on seafood packaging.

Endorsed by both the MSC and HSFSA, leading fishing company committed to the sustainability of our oceans, Irvin & Johnson Limited (I&J), have partnered to raise consumer awareness of their certified sustainable and omega-3 rich Cape hake product range. Giving the campaign feet in-store with its rollout to over 600 supermarkets nationwide, seafood shoppers are encouraged to look for the I&J Cape hake products at their local Pick n Pay, Spar or Checkers stores.

Facts about cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke)

The World Health Organization states that globally about 17.9 million people die of cardiovascular diseases [CVD] annually . It is recorded as the most life-threatening disease in the world, and according to Dr Liesl Zuhlke, cardiovascular disease is among three main causes of death in South Africa, second to HIV/Aids. Prof Naidoo, the CEO of the HSFSA states that 43% of all deaths in South Africa due to non-communicable diseases, 18% of the 43% is due to cardiovascular diseases .

Why choose sustainable tinned fish?

Tinned fish is a convenient source of nutrients that assists in reducing the risk of heart conditions and strokes allowing you to live a longer life. Mike Gibson, a medical doctor at the Stanford Cardiovascular Institute, states that consuming fish “changes the wall of the cells in your heart and stabilises the wall of the membrane”. He continued to explain in an interview that the nutrients contained in fish make the blood less sticky and less clumpy, which helps build your heart’s resistance towards arrhythmia.

In this case, up to 80% of heart disease and stroke can be prevented by simply living a healthy lifestyle that includes healthy eating. According to Professor Pamela Naidoo, CEO of the HSFSA, naturally oily fish, such as sardines, are a high protein option and high in Omega-3 fats which are good for your heart and can help to improve overall wellbeing – no wonder many health-conscious consumers aim to include at least 2 to 3 servings of fish in their weekly diet.

Along with the many health benefits for your heart, fish is also known to prevent several other diseases. Research published by The Journal of Translational Psychiatry indicates that the nutrients contained in fish, such as Omega-3, protein, vitamin D and selenium, reduce the risk of autoimmune diseases and inflammation, help with bone development, and increase the effectiveness of antidepressants.

Not only does tinned fish have added nutritional benefits, but it is a tasty and affordable protein source for you and the family. A can of sardines, for example, will contain 50% of your daily protein requirement, 15% daily intake of iron, and contains soft and edible bones that provide 20% of your daily intake of calcium that is affordable and delicious. So, whether you’re looking for healthy, affordable school lunch options or to host a gourmet seafood dinner, sustainable tinned or white fish is a viable option.

Making our way to your heart and plate

HSFSA strives to help you reduce the risk of diseases by encouraging you to make the healthiest choices. So, when you are choosing your household fish favourites, remember to look out for the Heart Mark and MSC’s blue fish label to help yourself, your family and future generations from heart-related diseases while also safeguarding the ocean against overfishing.

Join the fight against heart diseases this Heart Awareness Month - now is the time to focus on what keeps you, your family, and the ocean ticking. Think happy heart, happy ocean.

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Background information



APPROVED AS PART OF
THE HEART AND STROKE
FOUNDATION EATING PLAN

About the Heart & Stroke Foundation South Africa

The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) plays a leading role in the fight against preventable heart disease and stroke, with the aim of seeing fewer people in South Africa suffer premature deaths and disabilities.

The HSFSA, established in 1980, is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation which aims to reduce the cardiovascular disease (CVD) burden in South Africa and ultimately on the country's healthcare system. Their mission is to empower people in South Africa to adopt healthy lifestyles, make healthy choices easier, seek appropriate care and encourage prevention.

With around 450 different Heart Mark products to choose from across 11 food categories, consumers will find Heart Mark choices for most of the foods they usually buy.

www.heartfoundation.co.za



About the Marine Stewardship Council

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international non-profit organisation which sets a globally recognised, science-based standard for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability.

The blue MSC label on a seafood product means that: it comes from a wild-catch fishery which has been independently certified to the MSC's science-based standard for environmentally sustainable fishing; it is fully traceable to a sustainable source. It can be found on more than 100 species of seafood in 100 countries.

www.msc.org